

Christ from the dead....” And the great apostle to the Gentiles teaches us after this manner. “If the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised; and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain.” And again, “If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order; Christ the first fruits, afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming.” And again, “For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.” And again it is the apostles greatest desire to know Jesus “and the power of his resurrection.” And again he says, I willing to suffer *anything, everything* so that “If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead.” And now brethren, hear ye the testimony of the beloved disciple and Apostle John, “Beloved, *now* are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.”

And now we will listen to the words of Jesus himself. He says, “But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living.” Again he says, “The hour is coming, in which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” And once more he says, “I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die.” And what do these words of inspiration teach us? Briefly these things: To sorrow not as those who have no hope. For by the resurrection of Jesus we have been begotten unto a *living hope*. We are taught that Jesus arose from the dead and therefore we shall rise. The grave shall not be able to hold us. Death shall not forever keep us down. Because our Christ lives we shall live also. Our God is the God of the living and not of the dead.

I look upon the grassy mounds where Elkhart’s dead are laid. There are some small graves there among them where the little ones lie sleeping. There are others larger where the fathers and mothers rest awaiting the sounding trump. And as I looked I stood by two other graves. The one—my own mother’s, upon which the

snows of these sixteen winters have fallen and the flowers for so many springtimes have opened their eyes in radiant life; the snows of winter the emblem of spotless purity through Jesus, and the opening flowers the emblem of resurrection of life and glory by Jesus! And then I stood by another,—with Mary Magdalene, I stood by Jesus’ tomb on the first Easter morn. With her I looked into it, but ’twas empty. With her I saw “the place where the Lord lay.” But he was not there. And I too, heard the angel’s words, “He is not here; for he is risen.” Look, oh look ye into the Savior’s empty tomb this morning. And listen while I tell you the words it speaks. They that sleep in all these narrow graves upon a thousand hills and in all the church-yards of earth, SHALL WAKE AGAIN, SHALL RISE AGAIN, SHALL LIVE AGAIN. Let your tears be dried, ye mourners of earth, for your dead shall live again. They shall come forth from the power of death and the grave. What a mighty victory!

“Let shouts of rejoicing ascend,  
Till heaven to earth shall reply;  
For we who have God for our friend,  
Are sure that our triumph is nigh!”

Make way! oh earth for the Conqueror is coming! Harken, ye waters of the great deep, for the trump is sounding! How this old earth will be plowed up as deep as the deepest grave! How the waters of the deep will roll in breakers when the sea, where the ship-wrecked rest, gives up its dead. Hark! I can hear even now the voices of uncounted millions, who come rushing out of the gates of death, flying toward the gates of life, shouting VICTORY. The greatest shout of triumph that earth ever heard will be nothing compared to the shouts of the rising host. What greetings when the multitudes of the risen going up shall meet the hosts of heaven coming down! “The songs of these bursting sepulchres, when Christ shall come, will be sweeter than the song of the morning stars.” (Christine Evans.) The joys of those who are Christ’s at his coming will be more sublime than the fullest joys earth ever knew. The glory and radiance of the resurrection morn will be brighter than the brightest dawn earth ever saw; for the flashing streams of glory and light from the eternal throne shall envelope the whole earth. “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection.”

We shall sleep, but not forever,  
There will be a glorious dawn!  
We shall meet to part, no, never,  
On the resurrection morn!  
From the deepest caves of ocean,  
From the desert and the plain,  
From the valley and the mountain  
Countless throngs shall rise again.

But some one may even now, as in the days of Paul, be ready to ask, “How are the dead raised up? and with what body do they come?” Now we will look into the Book for information. We are told that “It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.” Again “Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, (die) but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.”

Again, “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God; and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” Once again, “For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body.” John says, “When he—Christ—shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.” And what do these scriptures teach us? Simply this: We shall come forth with glorified, spiritual bodies. Paul will lose his thorn in the flesh. Jacob will lose his lameness. The lame, the maimed, the halt, the sick, the deaf, the blind—all, all of earth’s infirmities will be healed. A purified and sanctified soul will dwell in a perfect, celestial body. The bent forms and wrinkled brows, and tottering steps of our aged fathers and mothers will all be succeeded by immortal vigor. Sown a natural body, you see; but raised a spiritual body.

And the risen Lord assures us of a heavenly home and eternal rest. You remember Jesus promised that he would take his disciples with him. “In my father’s house are many mansions, if it were not so I would have told you; I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am there ye may be also.” When Jesus had finished his mission upon earth he ascended to heaven. And my brethren some of these days he will come again to receive us unto himself. Here we have trials and difficulties but they will soon be over. Sorrows come and bitter tears and sickness and pain and death. But all these will be succeeded by joy and glad-